Directorate General of Commercial Intelligence and Statistics (DGCI&S), Calcutta growth in exports during April—February, 2000-01, April—March, 2000-01, and February, 2001 are as under:

Year	Growth rate in US $ terms
February 2001	10.46%
April—February, 2000-01	20.03%
April—March, 2000-01	19.8%

Export performance *inter-alia* is influenced by international market conditions, export competitiveness of the domestic industry, and that of the competitors in other countries etc. Exports in recent past have been affected due to general slow down in world trade in major importing countries. Areas where sluggish export growth has been noticed during 2000-01 are plantation, gems and jewellery, sports goods, projects goods handicraft and carpets etc.

Export of wheat to Iraq

181. SHRI C.M. IBRAHIM:
SHRI PARMESHWAR KUMAR AGARWALLA:

Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether 23,000 tonnes of wheat was exported to Iraq recently;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether two wheat shipments were rejected by Iraq;

(d) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor;

(e) the loss caused thereby and those found responsible therefor, and

(f) what positive action Government have taken to resume the exports to Iraq?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI MURASOLI MARAN): (a) and (b) A total quantity of 74018 MT of wheat in four vessels was exported to Iraq by three private exporters.

(c) and (d) The consignments were rejected by the Grain Board of

Iraq (GBI) as it contained inorganic foreign matters such as sand, dust etc. and live insects.

(e) The consignments rejected have been sold to other buyers who found no quality problems. No loss has been caused to the Government.

(f) An official delegation from Government of India visited Iraq explained out stand that as per contractual specifications foreign matter upto 2% maximum is permitted, and even CODEX standards allow inorganic foreign matter upto 0.5%, and the GBI had approved the cargo prior to shipment, whereupon the GBI has agreed to import wheat from India and to replenish the rejected goods by December, 2001.

Impact of free imports on industrial growth

182. DR. DASARI NARAYANA RAO: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether industrial growth of the country has slowed down considerably particularly after announcing the opening of free imports in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof, sector-wise; and

(c) the steps Government have taken to arrest this trend?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (DR. RAMAN): (a) and (b) The industrial slowdown is on account of several factors. There has been no impact of free imports after removal of Quantitative Restrictions (QRs) w.e.f 1st of April 2001. India's non oil imports during April-May 2001-02 have declined by 6.01% over the corresponding period of previous year.